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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 9

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Argentina, Australia*, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon*, Canada, Chile, Croatia*, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland*, France, Germany, Greece*, Ireland, Liechtenstein*, Luxembourg*, Madagascar, Mexico, New Zealand*, Nicaragua, Norway*, Papua New Guinea*, Philippines, Portugal*, Republic of Korea, Slovenia*, South Africa, Spain*, Sweden*, Switzerland*, Tunisia, Turkey* and Zambia*: draft resolution

1997/... Integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system

The Commission on Human Rights,

Reaffirming that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international human rights instruments,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the subject,

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* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recalling also that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/CONF.157/23), the World Conference on Human Rights affirmed that the human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights, and called for action to integrate the equal status and human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activity,

Emphasizing the major role of the Commission on the Status of Women in promoting equality between women and men, and recalling resolution 41/... on mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, adopted by that Commission at its forty-first session,

Bearing in mind that, in the Platform for Action, the Fourth World Conference on Women called on all relevant organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, all human rights bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to give full, equal and sustained attention to the human rights of women in the exercise of their respective mandates,

Recognizing the need to promote and strengthen national and international efforts to improve the status of women in all areas in order to foster the elimination of discrimination against women,

Reaffirming the important role women's groups and non-governmental organizations play in promoting and protecting the human rights of women,

Reiterating the need for States and the relevant United Nations bodies to include in their human rights education activities information on the human rights of women,

1. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1997/40);

2. Concerned that implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action remains far from the objectives set forth in the two documents and, therefore, calls once again for intensified effort at the international level to integrate the equal status and human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activity and to address these issues regularly and systematically throughout relevant United Nations bodies and mechanisms;

3. Encourages the efforts made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, within his mandate established by the General Assembly in resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, to coordinate

the activities of relevant United Nations organs, bodies and mechanisms dealing with human rights in considering violations of the human rights of women and welcomes in this regard the initiative of the High Commissioner to undertake a comprehensive review of the technical cooperation programme from a gender perspective;

4. Also encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination among all human rights treaty bodies, special rapporteurs, special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Commission and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and requests that they regularly and systematically take a gender perspective into account in the implementation of their mandates, including information and qualitative analysis in their reports on violations of the human rights of women;

5. Welcomes, in this regard, the paper [1] prepared by the United Nations Development Fund for Women for the meeting of the special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts and chairpersons of the working groups of the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights held from 28 to 30 May 1996 [2] and the description therein that gender-specific reporting and analysis is an examination of the effects of gender on the form which a human rights violation takes, the circumstances in which a particular violation occurs, the consequences for the victim, and the availability and accessibility of remedies, and urges the implementation of the recommendations pertaining to working methods and reporting methodology including sources of information and gender-specific analysis in conclusions and recommendations;

6. Calls for the further strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women and between the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women through, inter alia, regular inter-secretariat cooperation to ensure that the joint work plan of the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women reflects all aspects of work under way and identifies where obstacles/impediments exist and areas for

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[1] E/CN.4/1997/131, annex.

[2] See E/CN.4/1997/3.

further collaboration, and requests that this plan be made available to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session and to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session;

7. Recognizes that the success of mainstreaming women's rights will depend on the formalizing, at the highest levels, of a clear policy and guidelines on the integration of a gender perspective into the United Nations human rights system, and draws attention to the need to develop practical strategies to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the expert group meeting on the development of guidelines for the integration of a gender perspective into human rights activities and programmes;[3]

8. Welcomes the efforts of the treaty bodies to monitor more effectively the human rights of women in their activities, including such initiatives as the round table on human rights approaches to women's health with a focus on reproductive and sexual health rights, organized jointly by the United Nations High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Population Fund;

9. Affirms that it is the responsibility of all treaty bodies, in their work, to integrate a gender perspective and in order to do so, the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General should be given due consideration, in particular to:

(a) Develop gender-sensitive guidelines to be used in the review of States parties' reports;

(b) Develop, as a matter of priority, a common strategy towards mainstreaming the human rights of women into their work, so that each body, within its mandate, monitors the human rights of women;

(c) Incorporate a gender analysis and regularly exchange information in the development of general comments and recommendations with a view to the preparation of general comments which reflect a gender perspective;

(d) Incorporate a gender perspective into concluding observations so that the concluding observations of each treaty body delineate the strengths and weaknesses of each State party insofar as enjoyment by women of the rights guaranteed by a particular treaty is concerned;

10. Urges States to limit the extent of any reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible,

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[3] E/CN.4/1996/105, annex.

ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention or otherwise incompatible with international treaty law, and regularly review them with a view to withdrawing them;

11. Urges the relevant organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, all human rights bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to provide training in human rights of women for all United Nations personnel and officials, especially those in human rights and humanitarian relief activities, and promote their understanding of the human rights of women so that they recognize and deal with violations of the human rights of women and can fully take into account the gender aspect of their work, and, in particular, encourages the Centre for Human Rights to undertake a systematic review of its information and training materials, including materials relating to the conducting of field operations, with a view to revising such materials where necessary in order to ensure the integration of a gender perspective and to bear in mind the need for expertise in the human rights of women in the recruitment of staff;

12. Welcomes the exchange of information between the United Nations High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and non-governmental organizations, and calls for continued cooperation between the two on integrating the human rights of women;

13. Draws attention to the need to give due consideration to the human rights of women and the girl child in the preparations for the five-year review of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

14. Renews its call to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure the availability of expertise on gender issues and the human rights of women in order to provide advice to him/her on integrating the human rights of women throughout the Centre for Human Rights and to liaise with other relevant United Nations bodies in this regard;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution at its fifty-fourth session;

16. Decides to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fourth session.